PUDUKKOTTAI STATE

NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU

BULLETIN] AUGUST 7, 1943 [No. 158

LECTURE CLVIII.

ALLIES WARNING TO THE ITALIANS.

WAR ON MAINLAND TO BEGIN.

The Allied Forces will soon be fighting on your mainland. Two hundred thousand of your soldiers are isolated.

By trickery your soldiers are being disarmed by the Germans. Marshal Badoglio has kept from you messages addressed to you by Gen. Eisenhower. Marshal Badoglio has done nothing for peace.

Soon the Germans, in their last attempt to delay their inevitable defeat, will try to fight throughout the length and breadth of Italy.

We shall push on inexorably through Italy. You will inevitably suffer all the horrors of war—war on the Italian Peninsula. We have waited. We have warned you. We have no choice.

Our attitude is clear. Régimes based on violence and on slavery, must be eradicated and destroyed. On this point we are adamant. We insist on the unconditional surrender of these evil forces.

You have been betrayed by Mussolini. Now Pietro Badoglio is betraying you. We have bided our time, awaiting your decision. We have awaited the decision of the Italian people for 8 days now.

Now our forces are on the move. Our forces are irresistible. We are at your gates. You will be made to feel the grim realities of war, by our future operations.

EROSION.

BY

Sir Alexander Tottenham, C. I. E., Administrator, Pudukkottai State.

" Erosion is the biggest problem confronting the country, bigger than any politics—*(General Smuts)*"

" Anti-erosion work is more important than even Education or Medical relief—*(Sir A. Tottenham)*"

Erosion is a world-wide problem. Europe is the continent least affected, though even in parts of Europe, for example the Russian steppes, erosion is a serious problem. In America, Asia and Africa its importance cannot be exaggerated. In regard to Africa, General Smuts has said 'Erosion is the biggest problem confronting this country; bigger than any politics'. The Darbar consider that in our own State anti-erosion work is more important than even Medical Relief or Education. But, until the public have been further educated in the importance of this work, it would be hopeless to give it the priority to which it is entitled in our Budgets.

2. Erosion is of two main kinds. Erosion due to Wind, and erosion due to Water. Erosion due to wind is of little or no importance in our State, though there is reason to believe that in Coimbatore, and perhaps other Districts of the Madras Presidency, it is of much greater importance. How important it is in the U. S. A. may be learnt from the story told by Stuart Chase in that terribly interesting book 'Rich Land, Poor Land' that 'an old Nebraska farmer was sitting on his porch during a dust storm. Asked what he was watching so intently, he replied 'I'm counting the Kansas farms, as they go by'! In Pudukkóṭṭai we have to deal with erosion due to water.

3. This begins as 'sheet erosion', which most people would not notice at all. Layer after layer of the soil is peeled off, and finally, after less than a foot, it may be, is gone, what the Americans call 'hard-pan' is reached, which is infertile, at all events unless it has been ploughed up, and exposed to the action of the atmosphere for some time. For the time being, at all events, the soil is devoid of plant-food. Then come gullies, small at first, increasing rapidly, and finally forming gorges, perhaps 20 feet deep. There are such gorges in our State, for example at Áriyúr vári and Tuḍayampáṛai. As the process goes on large areas of bare rock are laid bare, as can be seen at the places already mentioned, and at many others in the State, among which may be mentioned Mañaturai vari (which feeds Valnáḍ Periya kuḷam) and Ponnáchchikuḷam, both in Álanguḍi taluk.

4. It must always be borne in mind that—apart from the serious silting up of the tanks caused by erosion—it is not a mere question of transporting soil from one place to another, where it may be equally useful. Whatever may be the nature of the silt carried by the Nile in Egypt, and some of the large rivers in China, the silt formed by erosion in our State is *infertile*, owing to the changes in the physical and chemical structure and composition of the soil that it undergoes, when carried to any distance by water. In

their book 'The Rape of the Earth', Jacks and Whyte say 'The water breaks down the transported soil-crumbs into their constituent particles of sand, silt, and clay, thereby destroying most of the characteristic soil properties and fertility, so that even when the eroded particles are redeposited on cultivable land, they have lost much of their productive capacity'. (p. 33)

5. It is not too much to say that, unless effective measures are taken to check erosion in our State, within a measurable time—it may be a century, it may be more, or less—a very large part of the high grounds, such as are common in the Álaṅguḍi and Tirumayyam taluks (there is much less erosion in Kuḷattúr taluk, probably owing to the fact that there is less laterite in the subsoil there and more gneiss) will have been reduced to a desert of bare and eroded rock, scarred by horrifying ravines, incapable of supporting any form of life,—human, animal or vegetable; while all the tanks will have been silted up, and most of the cultivable lands destroyed by the deposit of infertile silt.

6. All books on this subject lay stress on the fact that this artificial or man-caused erosion, as opposed to natural erosion, which is on the whole a beneficial process, is of *recent origin*. Such appears to be the case in our State. In fact, if erosion had been proceeding for any considerable period at the same pace as at present, the condition of the State would already be such as has been foretold above. The Vattam Karnam (village accountant) assured the writer that where the appalling Áriyúr ravine now is, forty years ago there was no ravine at all. That this is literally true the writer cannot guarantee, but it seems not unlikely.

7. What started it? The clue may possibly be found in the following quotation from the State History. "It may be mentioned that the Resident made arrangements for clearing the forests and increasing the cultivable area of the State. In 1826 in reply to a question of the Governor to the Raja whether the country was covered as much with woods as before, the Raja informed him that 'agreeably to his father the Colonel's' (i. e., Col. Blackburne's) 'order, the woods had been almost cut down, and that cultivation was going on, some thin wood remaining still in some places'. The fact remains, however, that in some of the areas where erosion is worst there is still a good deal of scrub jungle, and of course there was never high forest in Pudukkóṭṭai.

8. Cart-tracks are a fruitful cause of gullying. This is mentioned by Lord Hailey in his work on Africa. In any area where erosion is in progress the process can be seen by which at first small gullies are formed by the wheel tracks, then these are deepened, till the cart-track has to be abandoned, and another route is taken by its side, while the original track cuts deeper and deeper till a formidable gully is formed, to grow in due course into a ravine.

9. Nothing had been done to check erosion till some 6 years ago. Attention had been concentrated entirely on the silting-up of tanks, which it was sought to check by building expensive masonry grade-walls at the ***bottom*** of the *váris* leading into the tanks. Owing to their cost, these could only be few, whereas hundreds—nay thousands—are required. They were not particularly effective, even in stopping silt reaching the tanks. An idea was entertained that the silt deposited behind them might be removed in lorries, but of course this was never done! The cost would have been prohibitive, and it would

have been difficult to find a place to dump the silt, whence it would not at once have washed down into another tank, or some cultivable fields. The problem of the rapid denudation of the *uplands* was of course not touched at all. It was like putting a basin on the floor to stop a leak in the roof!

10. What we now aim at is *preventing denudation and consequent formation of silt,* not merely the disposal of silt after it has formed, and after valuable soil has been carried away from the uplands and defertilized. The cardinal principle that has now been adopted is that anti-erosion work must begin at the *top* of the eroded area, and work down to the bottom. Rubble dams have been built in very large numbers, and earthen bunds formed to check surface-wash. Dams formed of the trunks of palmyras (Borassus flabellifer) were tried at first, and would have been very cheap, but were not a success, owing probably to seasoned timber not having been used.

11. Steep banks have been terraced, and on the bunds and terraces various kinds of grass have been sown. Two African species have been tried, '*Kikuyu grass*' (*Pennisetum clandestinum*) which had already been cultivated at Kóḍaikánal, and '*Giant Star Grass*' (*Cynodon plectostachyum*) which was specially obtained from Kenya and Pretoria. Various indigenous grasses have also been tried. The *Kikuyu grass* has not proved successful, but the *Giant Star* has done well in some places. Much more remains to be done in this direction.

12. A considerable area adjoining Maṇaturaivári has been ploughed with the State motor tractor, *along the slope*, and *Chóḷam* (*Sorghum vulgare*) sown. The ploughing is of course very beneficial, but the *Chóḷam* was sown at the wrong time and failed. Aloes (*Agave*), Cashew (*Anacardium occidentale*) and *Virali* (*Dodonaea viscosa*) are other species planted or sown. Owing to the comparatively cheap nature of these expedients, a good deal of work has been done in half a dozen places, and a steadily increasing allotment is being made for these works in the Budget.

13. The ryots were at first by no means convinced that these works were to their advantage. They said that they were cutting off the supply to their tanks; which in any case were doomed to destruction sooner or later, if nothing was done—a fact that they did not grasp—though actually the ultimate effect of the works must be to improve the water supply, by raising the general water-level in the upland sub soil, while checking the velocity and reducing the violence of floods. Now, it is believed that many, even of the ryots, are beginning to see how beneficial these works are.

14. What the Darbar are doing at present is but little, it is true, having regard to the magnitude of the problem. Lakhs, perhaps crores, might be spent on it. That is not possible, but the Darbar consider that it is better to go on methodically, year after year doing what little they can, rather than to do nothing. They do not subscribe to the principle 'Posterity has done nothing for me, so there is no reason why I should do anything for posterity'.

15. The Darbar must not omit to mention the valuable advice that they received from Rao Sahib E. V. Padmanabha Pillai who was lent for a short time by the Madras Government to study the problems of erosion in the State, and advise as to the methods to be taken to deal with them. He visited the State from 28th August to 7th September, 38 and again from 21—1—39 to 1—2—39, and wrote a useful note on the subject, which the Darbar had printed.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

31—7—43 to 6—8—43.

Sicily.—CATANIA held by the Germans for weeks has fallen. The German forces have been cut in two. The Allied troops are not yet astride the Etna road and the railway, but the sea communications are now almost denied to the enemy. British and Canadian troops are pushing their way towards the Etna foot hills. In the ADRANO area road and railway communications have been destroyed.

The places captured during the week are:—NICOSIA, LEONFORTE, POLLINA, CASTEL BUONO, AGIRA, GANGI, NISSORIA, SAN STEFANO, SPERLINGA, MAURO, CASTEL VERDI, MISTRELLA, CASTEL DE TUSA, CASTEL DI LUCIO, CENTURINE, REGALBUTO, CENTURIPE, and CANTENANUOVA.

Russia.—OREL and BYELGOROD have fallen and the Germans are retreating towards BRYANSK, abandoning their tanks and guns. OREL is an important base in Central RUSSIA which the Germans had held from September, 1941.

Air-war.—HAMBURG was raided 7 times in 7 days. REMSCHID, an important centre of machine-tool industry in GERMANY, was raided for the first time. Another target was PLOESTI in RUMANIA, where oil-fields, and installations were seriously damaged.

S. W. Pacific.—In July more bombs were dropped on enemy objectives in this area than in any other month of the war. The action centred round MUNDA (Solomons) and SALAMAUA(New GUINEA). Allied forces shot down 436 aircraft and sank three cruisers, 15 destroyers, one submarine chaser, 11 seaplane tenders, 11 merchant vessels and at least 62 barges. Over 1,000 tons of bombs were dropped on MUNDA and another 1,000 tons in the SALAMAUA area. In New GUINEA Allied forces are gradually pushing towards SALAMAUA. In NEW GEORGIA MUNDA has fallen.

SHORTLAND ISLAND had a low-level raid, in which the Japanese lost 7 float-planes, 3 barges and a cargo boat.

Burma.—In the month of July the R. A. F. damaged over 650 rivercraft in its operations over BURMA. In addition, other important parts of the enemy transportation system were bombed. Over 300 goods wagons and 22 locomotives were hit. On almost all occasions the crews had to battle their way in severe weather. The targets were scattered all over BURMA—along the ARAKAN coast, along the supply routs from TAUNGUP to the Kaladan—along the interior rivers—the Irrawaddy and the Chindwin, the Yaw and the Myittha. At times when the weather prevented operations a halt was called, but even then reconnaissance contiuned. Over 100 living-Quarters of the enemy were destroyed or damaged.

On July 29 two Japanese ships were attacked, one at CHATHAM ISLAND and the other at PORT-BLAIR in the ANDAMANS.

The following places were raided during the week:—

MONYWA, TANGON, MYINGYAN, CHANK, PINTHA, SUPRABUM, SHINGBAN, NAMTI, MANYWOT, TAZAW, KWAZON, IUDIN, SINOH, ATET NANRA, BHAMO, NYAUNGBINWUN, THANBYUZAYAT, PAGODA POINT, VETLET, MOKSOGYOU, KINU, THAZI, and MEIKITLA.

The Atlantic.—A force of U-boats, numbering between 25 and 30, which were concentrated in the N. Atlantic were engaged by the Royal Navy and by aircraft of the coastal Command when it attempted an attack against a large and valuable east-bound convoy. Dense fog and icebergs added to the hazards of both the escort and the convoy. The battle lasted 3 days but the enemy was denied the opportunity of launching even a single attack. The U-boats were either sunk or driven away. On the 3rd day the enemy, or what was left him, withdrew. The entire convoy proceeded to its destination unhurt.

ALLIED AIR RAIDS.

26—7—43. (Monday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

Day:—

U-Boat and aircraft works in HAMBURG (Germany).
Port installations at WILHELMSHAVEN and WESSERMUNDE (Germany).
Rubber factories at HANOVER (Germany).
Air-fields at ABBEVILLE, MERVILLE and ST. OMER (France) and at COURTRAI (Belgium) (26 Allied planes missing; 50 enemy planes destroyed).

NIGHT:—

The port of HAMBURG (Germany).
Air-fields and ground targets in North and north-west FRANCE.
An enemy minesweeper off the FRENCH coast.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Railway communications at MARINA DI PAOLA (South Italy).
Shipping in SICILIAN CHANNEL.
Communications on the Island.
Air-fields at CAPO DICHINO, MONTE CARVINO RAVELLA and CATUA SCALEA.
Railway communications in South ITALY.
Military installations at MILAZZO and **Communications** at AZIRA (Sicily).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

The air-field at VILA (Kolombangara Island).
Enemy harbour at LARAT (Tanimbar Islands).
WATDEK Island (Kai Islands).
Gun positions at KOMEATUM (N. Guinea).
SALAMAUA (N. Guinea).
KISKA (Aleutians).

27—7—43 (Tuesday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—

Industrial targets at ZEEBRUGGE.
Air-fields at COURTRAI (Belgium) and WORNSDRECH (Holland).
TRICQUEVILLE (France).
Minesweeper off FRANCE.

NIGHT:—

The port of HAMBURG (Germany).
Objectives in the RUHR.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

An air-field near NAPLES (Italy).
Railway yards at LIONI and GALISI (Italy).
Air-field at SALIA (Italy).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

The air-field at KAHILI and BALLALE (Solomons).
Jap positions near MUNDA.
The air-field at VILA (Kolombangara).
KISKA (Aleutians).
An enemy vessel north of PAGODA point.

28—7—43 (Wednesday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—

Enemy air-fields at COXYDE (Belgium).
Targets at AMSTERDAM (Holland).

NIGHT:—

Aircraft factories at KASSEL and MAGDEBURG (Germany).
Coke ovens at ZEEBRUGGE (Belgium).
Enemy air-fields in Northern FRANCE (24 Axis planes shot down).

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Axis road and rail communications in SICILY.
Shipping in SICILIAN harbour.
REGALBUTO (Sicily).
Axis air-fields and communications centres in South Italy.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front

FAR EAST.

A Jap destroyer and a merchantman off New Guinea.
Jap air-fields on TIMOR.
Jap positions on MUNDA (New Guinea).
The air-field at VILA (Kolombangara).
A Jap vessel off TAVOY Island.
Jap radio station on Diamond Island (Burma).
Enemy installations at KAUNGTHAUNG Island.
Air-field at PAGODA point (Burma).
A Jap ship in PORT BLAIR (Andamans).
HONGKONG (China).

29—7—43. (Thursday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—(13 Allied planes missing).

Shipyards at KIEL.
Aircraft factory at WARNEMUNDE (Germany).
A power station at ROUEN (France).
The air-field at MERVILLE (France) and at Fort ROUGE.

NIGHT —

The port at HAMBURG (Germany).
Enemy air-fields in GERMANY and FRANCE.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Shipping in the AEGEAN Sea.
Enemy Schooner in NASSAU Bay.
Railway communications in SICILY.

RUSSIA

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap airbase at MUNDA (New Georgia).
Jap Installations at ARAWE (New Britain).

Jap shipping off CAPE GLOUCESTER (New Britain).
The air-field at KOEPANG (Timor).
LARAT LINGIAT (Taniantar Island).
A railroad bridge on MU River (Burma).
Towns between IRRAWADDY and CHINDWIN (Burma).
A factory at TANGON (Burma).
Mills at MYINGYAN (Burma).
SUPRABUM.
Motor vehicles in front of KAMAING (Burma).
Rolling stock at NAMTI (Burma).

30—7—43 (Friday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—(27 enemy planes shot down and 22 Allied planes missing).
Aircraft plant at KASSEL.
Enemy air-fields in FRANCE and at SCHIPOL (Holland) and at COURTRAI and COXYDE (Belgium).

NIGHT:—(17 Allied planes missing).
Machine-tool industry at REMSHEID.
Enemy air-field and railways in FRANCE and HOLLAND

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

The air-fields at GROTTAGLIE and PRACTICADI-MARE (Italy).
Enemy shipping and the port of MILAZZO (Sicily)
Sweeps over SARDINIA. (21 enemy planes shot down and 1 Allied plane missing).
Shipping and seaplanes at anchor off GREECE.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

Enemy barges in VITIAZ Straits (New Georgia).
GAROKA area (New Guinea).
The air-field at BALLALE (Solomons).
Jap positions at MUNDA point (New Georgia).
Jap installations at CAPE GLOUCESTER and GASMATA (New Britian).
ANDAMANS (Bay of Bengal).
Localities in MAYU Peninsula (Burma).
Army huts at INDIN, SINOH and ATETNANRA (Burma).
Sampans on the IRRAWADDY (Burma).

31—7—43 (Saturday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—
Air-fields at POIX, MERVILLE, TRICQUEVILLE, ABBEVILLE, ST. OMER, AMIENS and LILLE (France).

NIGHT:—
No air activity.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Communications centre of ADRANO and RANDAZZO (Sicily).
Enemy positions on the Island.
The harbour at MESSINA (Sicily).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap positions on New GEORGIA.
Jap barges along the coast of (New Guinea).
Shipping in the IRRAWADDY (Burma).
Enemy barracks at BHAMO (Burma).
Rolling stock at NYAUNG BINWUN (Burma).
Railway centre at MYINGYAN (Burma).
YE-U (Burma).
Lorries near KINBIN (Burma).
Enemy huts near BUTHIDAUNG (Burma).

1—8—43 (Sunday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—
Oil refineries at PLOESTI (Rumania).

NIGHT:—
No information.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

The docks at NAPLES (Italy).
The air-field at CAPO DICHINO (Italy).
The port of MILAZZO.
Railway communications in SICILY and S. ITALY.
RANDAZZO.
The railway lines at NAPLES (Italy).

RUSSIA

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Oil installations at BOELA (D. E. Indies).
The air-fields at GASMATA (N. Britain) and LAE (N. Guinea).
Enemy barges at CAPE GLOUCESTER (N. Britain).
Enemy gun positions at MUNDA (N. Georgia)
KOLOMBANGARA Island (Solomons).
KISKA (Aleutians).
Shipping and the dock and storage area at KATHA (Burma).
A bridge at SHWELI River (Burma).
Jap air-fields in North Burma.

ENEMY AIR RAIDS.

27—7—43 (Tuesday).

BRITAIN.

LONDON area (only an alert).

RUSSIA.

No enemy air activity.

FAR EAST.

Allied areas near LAE (N. Guinea).
Allied positions on TAMBU BAY area.

28—7—43 (Wednesday).

BRITAIN.

No information available.

RUSSIA.

No information available.

FAR EAST.

Allied positions near SALAMAUA (N. Guinea).

29—7—43 (Thursday).

BRITAIN.

A coastal district of EAST ANGLIA (England).

RUSSIA.

Air combats over OREL

FAR EAST.

No information available.

30—7—43 (Friday).

BRITAIN.

No enemy air activity.

RUSSIA.

UPPER DONETZ area.

FAR EAST.

Allied positions near MUNDA (New Georgia) and SALAMAUA (New Guinea).

31—7—43 (Saturday).

BRITAIN.

Coastal districts in EAST ANGLIA (1 Axis plane destroyed).

RUSSIA.

No enemy air activity.

FAR EAST.

BOBDUBI area (near SALAMAUA).

1—8—43 (Sunday).

RUSSIA.

UPPER DONETZ area.

FAR EAST.

Allied positions near MUNDA air-field (New Georgia).

2—8—43 (Monday).

BRITAIN.

No enemy air activity.

RUSSIA.

Air combats over OREL.

FAR EAST.

No information available.

SIDE LIGHTS.

BEDLAM OR PRISON ? Last week we wrote that Mussolini's home may be Bedlam, but it looks as though the fortress of the Brachi–formerly used by Mussolini himself as a place of execution—has already claimed him. His wife, and son, his daughter and his son-in-law Ciano—now no longer ITALY's Foreign Minister, not even Ambassador at the Vatican—have all been arrested and may follow him thither.

There, in the fortress prison, Mussolini, we fancy, will have ample leisure to read Nietsche's "Will-to Power", Hitler's birth-day present, though without either the will to power or the power to will, if he is not disturbed by visions of daggers in the air such as Macbeth saw. Or it may be that his mind is harrowed by ruminations such as came to Richard III on the battlefield of BOSWORTH :—

"The lights burn blue. It is now midnight.
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
Richard loves Richard ; that is, I am I !
Is there a murderer here ? No, Yes, I am :
Then fly : what ! from myself ? Great reason why :
Lest I revenge : What ! myself upon myself ?
Alack ! I love myself
I am a villain : Yet I lie : I am not.
Fool, of thyself speak well : fool, do not flatter.
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues
And every tongue brings in a several tale.
And every tale condemns me for a villain.
Perjury, perjury, in the highest degree :
Murder, stern murder, in the direst degree
All several sins, all used in each degree
Throng to the bar, crying, 'Guilty ! guilty '."

v v v v v v v v

OR EXILE. There are also rumours that, anticipating the surrender of ITALY and afraid of falling into Allied hands and being tried and condemned as a war criminal, Mussolini is contemplating escape into neutral territory. But the Neutrals have been warned by BRITAIN, AMERICA and RUSSIA that to harbour the war criminals is an act of hostility to the Allies.

v v v v v v v v

FASCISM. Benito Mussolini's downfall, hardly less dramatic than Hess's escape from GERMANY in 1941, shows the common fate that awaits ambition. Dictatorship is but a new name for tyranny.

Mussolini's dictatorship is gone, and with it Fascism and its pirate philosophy, the cult of the dagger and the knife. The Duce's 'boys' were held together by the common expedient employed by all gangster chieftains—plunder and a share-out of the spoils first in ITALY itself, then in ABYSSINIA, SPAIN, ALBANIA and GREECE. But when the spoils themselves were snatched away the miscellaneous rabble disintegrated.

The Badoglio Government has now dissolved the Fascist party, closed its tribunals and banned all its symbols and instruments of propaganda, down to text-books in schools.

v v v v v v v v

SYMBOLS AND SPIRIT. The Fascist symbols have gone but, not, we are afraid, the Fascist spirit yet. Mussolini has no doubt been replaced by Badoglio, but that is only to replace Fascism by militarism. It is well to remember that Badoglio was Mussolini's tool in using poison gas in ABYSSINIA, and latterly fought Mussolini's battles in GREECE and ALBANIA. Fascism may have gone but its poison lurks.

Badoglio's alleged overtures for an armistice are therefore suspect. Recent Axis reports of Armistice terms put out by the ROME Radio and the German News Agency are pure fiction. One of these reports stated that the Italians were considering the Allied peace conditions with 'great understanding'. It is all suspicious.

v v v v v v v v

TRIAL BALLOONS. Badoglio is either flying trial balloons to know the Allied mind, or he is playing for time to facilitate the evacuation of the German troops in ITALY. The position has become complicated. Mussolini has sold the Passo Brenner to Hitler, and Hitler is already in possession of the key points. Hitler's generals are disarming the Italian troops by fraud or force. Badoglio must extricate himself from the German Octopus before he can fly to the arms of the Allies, even if he would.

Meanwhile the Italian people, tired of war, clamour for peace, as the riots in MILAN and TURIN undoubtedly show. But they are powerless to impose their will on Badoglio.

Badoglio may also wait and delay, hoping for concessions. It has been argued that in capitulation there is no honour, and that honourable capitulation is a contradiction in terms. It has also been said that it leads to neither liberty nor peace, but the Allied offer of peace is only to perpetuate the present slavery and continue the present war, the masters alone being changed.

Roosevelt, Churchill and Eisenhower have done their best to make the point clear. Eisenhower broadcast to the Italians on July 29: "You want peace, You can have it immediateiy and honourably. We come to you as liberators. We will rid you of the Germans and deliver you from the horrors of war. Sicily proves that our occupation will be mild and benign. You may return to your peaceful and productive occupations. We shall set free your prisoners of war in Tunisia and Sicily." ITALY cannot in reason expect better terms: they are merciful, they are generous, considering the part that ITALY has played.

ITALY is still at war. But it is certain that the forces set in motion by Mussolini's downfall are not going to stop till ITALY is eliminated from the war. A few days ago, in the hope that good sense would prevail, Mr. Churchill permitted a period of slowed-down hostilities for ITALY to stew in her own juice for a time as he put it. But since then the Allied attitude has stiffened. **The Algiers Radio (Aug. 2) has told the Italian people:**

'By trickery you are being disarmed by the Germans. You have been betrayed by Mussolini. Now Pietro Badoglio is betraying you. We have bided our time, awaiting your decision, we have awaited the decision of the Italian people for eight days now.

'Now our forces are on the move. We are at your gates. We shall push on inexorably, through Italy. You will inevitably suffer all the horrors of war—War on the Italian Peninsula. We have waited. We have warned you. We have no choice.'

v v v v v v v v

THE AXIS HAS SNAPPED. Hitler too is reported to be ill. These Dictators, from the days of the tyrants of old, have a strange but common way of disappearing—a period of delirious boasting, followed by a period of hallucinations and finally sullenness, silence, resignation, illness and the mad-house. Where Mussolini has gone Hitler will surely follow. The crash that has overtaken Mussolini will involve Hitler also, that is, the meaning of the Hitler-Mussolini meeting at VERONA. Badoglio may declare that the war will continue and his Cabinet may ratify his decision. But can he possibly resist the Allies with a vulnerable coastline, cities undefended, industries blasted, armies defeated and dispirited, and a navy in hiding, the people clamouring for peace and an enemy in formidable strength, and with iron determination to win through? Badoglio or Emmanuel, ITALY must go out of the war, quietly, if she will surrender, or blasted out of existence, if she is so insane as to resist. The fall of ITALY will have great repercussions. The Axis, now bent, will soon crack. The crack will end in a fracture. The fissure which has now made its appearance will extend, first, to S-E. EUROPE where RUMANIA, HUNGARY and BULGARIA must be already planning how best to escape from the Allied wrath which is visibly descending on them. The fissure will spread to southern and occupied FRANCE also, and through BELGIUM and DENMARK to NORWAY, and even to neutral SWEDEN, which according to the latest reports, has refused for the first time permission to GERMANY to carry supplies to her armies in RUSSIA through Swedish territory. Once ITALY falls into Allied hands German production centres in AUSTRIA, Southern GERMANY and CZECHOSLOVAKIA can be as easily and as thoroughly attacked as the RUHR now is. The fall of Hitler is an inevitable consequence of the fall of Mussolini. Speculations as to his successor are said to have already started in GERMANY.

v v v v v v v v

SICILIAN CAMPAIGN. Following on the temporising attitude of the new Italian Government, the Allies have intensified the war. The Sicilian campaign, now in its fourth week, is yielding good rusults. During the week NISSORIA, NICOSIA, and SPERLINGA, small islands around SICILY have surrendered unconditionally. In SICILY itself SAN STEFANO, MISTRELLA, CASTAL DI TUSA, CASTAL DI DUCIC MOTTA, PATTINEO, REGALBUTO, CENTURIPE, AGIRA, and CANTENANUOVA have fallen. But the greatest triumph is the fall of CATANIA, where the Germans, strongly entrenched, resisted long and fiercely, without giving themselves time even to bury their dead. In the centre, the Canadians have advanced up to ADRANO at the foot of the Etna hills.

v v v v v v v v

RUSSIA. OREL, the great hedgehog base in RUSSIA which the enemy had held tenaciously for two years, has fallen and the Germans are retreating towards BRYANSK. The roads are reported to be littered with abandoned Tigers and guns.

BYELGOROD too has fallen—a black-week, indeed, for the Germans with successive defeats at CATANIA in SICILY, and OREL and BYELGOROD in RUSSIA.

v v v v v v v v

AIR-WAR. The air-war over EUROPE continues. The principal targets were HAMBURG which had 7 raids in a single week, and PLOESTI, where the Rumanian oil-fields are situated. The raid on the oil-fields was most devastating, comparable, we are informed, with the Battles of BRITAIN, STALINGRAD and TUNISIA. Oil installations, the Asto-Romana Refinery, and the Credit Minier Refinery were damaged. The enemy has been vitally hit, as he mainly depends on PLOESTI for his oil supplies.

v v v v v v v v

CHINA AND VICHY. Vichy's unfriendly attitude having become intolerable of late, CHINA has severed diplomatic relations with VICHY and taken over the Chinese section of the INDO-CHINA railway.

v v v v v v v v

FRENCH UNIFICATION. A further step has now been taken towards the unification of the French elements in AFRICA, by appointing Giraud as Commander-in-Chief of all French Forces, and de Gaulle as President of the Council of National Defence. Giraud will preside when military affairs are discussed, and de Gaulle when civil and political affairs are taken up for consideration.

v v v v v v v v

THE FOURTH INDIAN DIVISION Arrangements are being made to take a party representative of all ranks of this Division to visit Britain.

ANGERED FORCES OF COMMON HUMANITY WILL FINISH THE AXIS.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S WAR REVIEW.

The massed angered forces of common humanity are on the march. They are going forward—on the Russian Front, in the vast Pacific area, and in Europe—converging upon their ultimate objectives, Berlin and Tokyo. The corrupt Fascist régime in Italy is going to pieces. The pirate philosophy of the Fascists and the Nazis cannot stand adversity. The military superiority of the United Nations—on sea, on land, and in the air—has been applied in the right place and at the right time. Hitler refused to give sufficient help to save Mussolini. In fact, Hitler's troops in Sicily took all the motor equipment, leaving the Italian solders so stranded that they had no choice but to surrender. Once again, the Germans betrayed their Italian allies as they had done time and again on the Russian Front, and in the long retreat from Egypt through Libya, Tripoli and Tunisia, Mussolini came to the reluctant conclusion that the 'jig was up.' He could see the shadow of the long arm of justice.

For example, behind the invasion forces of N. Africa were thousands of ships and aircraft guarding the long, perilous, seaplanes carrying men, equipment, and supplies to the point of attack; and behind all these, there were railroad lines and highways that carried men and munitions to ports of embarkation—there were factories, and mines, and

farms that turned out materials—there were training camps where men learned how to perform the strange, and difficult, and dangerous tasks which were to meet them on the beaches and in the deserts and on the mountains. All this had to be repeated in the attack on Sicily. Here the factor of air attack was added—for we could use N. Africa as a base to soften up landing places and lines of defence in Sicily, and lines of supply in Italy.

MUSSOLINI WILL BE PUNISHED.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S ASSURANCE.

No criminal, will be allowed to escape by the expedient of resignation. Our terms to Italy are still the same as our terms to Germany and Japan—'unconditional surrender'. We will have no truck with Fascism in any way, shape, or manner. We will permit no vestige of Fascism to remain. Eventually, Italy will reconstitute herself. It will be the people of Italy who will do that, choosing their own Government in accordance with the basic democratic principles of liberty and equality.

In the meantime, the United Nations will not follow the pattern set by Mussolini, Hitler, and the Japanese for the treatment of occupied countries, the pattern of pillage and starvation. We are already helping the Italian people in Sicily. With their cordial co-operation, we are establishing and maintaining security and order—we are dissolving the organisations which have kept them under Fascist tyrrany—we are providing them with the necessaries of life until the time comes when they can fully provide for themselves.

Indeed, the people in Sicily to-day are rejoicing in the fact that, for the first time in years, they are permitted to enjoy the fruits of their own labour—they can eat what they themselves grow instead of having it stolen from them by the Fascists and the Nazis. In every country conquered by the Nazi, Fascist or Japanese militarists, the people have been reduced to the status of slaves or chattels.

RESTORATION OF FREEDOM.

It is our determination to restore these conquered peoples to the dignity of human beings, masters of their own fate, entitled to freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. We have started to make good on that promise.

I am sorry if I step on the toes of those Americans who, playing party politics at home, call that kind of foreign policy 'crazy altruism,' and 'starry-eyed dreaming.'

Meanwhile, the war in Sicily and Italy goes on, it must go on, and will go on, until the Italian people realise the futility of continuing to fight in a lost cause—the cause to which the people of Italy never gave their whole hearted approval and support.

A BLOW AGAINST STALEMATE.

by

SAMUEL CRAFTON.

What does the invasion of Sicily mean? It means that there is no Fortress of Europe any more. What can be done at one point can be done at another. It means

that a year of Hitler propaganda about the European Fortress is thrown out of the window. The roof of the Fortress has leaked for a long time. Now we see that its doors can be kicked open.

Oddly enough, Sicily has as much meaning for the Pacific and for Japan as it has for Europe. The attempted Axis excuses, its explanations that Sicily is only an island, will not greatly hearten its island ally in the east. Only an island, is it? So is the main body of Japan only an island and her most important possessions are only islands.

But these, so far, are surface meanings, obvious effects of a great event. Let us dig deeper.

Sicily has ruled out the danger of a stalemate. A stalemate was Hitler's last hope. Prime Minister Churchill warned us of this last May 20th when he said, in the ominious terms: '...it is in the dragging out of the war at an enormous expense, until the democracies are tired or bored or split, that the main hopes of Germany and Japan must now reside.'

Sicily is a blow against a stalemate. Hitler's loss of the hope of a stalemate is his most stunning defeat in Sicily, far more important than the ultimate loss of Sicily itself.

WINGS OVER ITALY CREEPING NORTHWARDS.

By Wing Commander L. V. Fraser.

The struggle for mastery now going on in Sicily is even more a battle for communications than was the Tunisian campaign. From this point of view, the recent bombing of Rome and of Naples all fit in to the strategic pattern. The bombing of military objectives in Rome is a step in the Allied plan to paralyse Italian rail-road communications taking supplies and reinforcements from the industrial north of the country to the toe—thence to Sicily. The attack on the city by heavy medium bombers of the North-West African Strategic Air Force, and by Liberators from the Middle-East Command, was concentrated on the Littoria and San Lorenzo marshalling yards and the Ciantino airfields. The two marshalling yards bottleneck all rail passenger and goods traffic to the south.

The Littorio yards are four miles north of Rome. It is an important goods centre. It is electrified and modelled on Germany's famous Hamm yard. It carries the bulk of all goods traffic from Northern Italy to Rome, Naples and the south-west coast. The San Lorenzo yard at Rome is also electrified and handles even more traffic. It is on a line adjoining the two main lines from Florence and Naples and the coastal lines from Genoa.

The two Ciantino airfields, 8½ miles from the centre of Rome, are bases for many squadrons of bombers and fighters.

Rome is even more important as the centre of a vast network of railways than as an industrial target. For months the Nazi grip on Italy's industries and railways has been complete. The Allies have looked on while the great marshalling yards at Rome have been choked with trainloads of German troops and equipment being moved to strategic points.

When the invasion of Sicily began, the immunity from bombing which Rome had hitherto enjoyed became an intolerable burden. Rome's turn had come. Bombing up to that point had no place in the immediate Allied strategy. It had to wait. When the moment did come, there was no mistaking the Allied intention.

MORE THAN AIR POWER.

Given sufficient air power everything else follows. The Allies, on the authority of Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, have more than air power—they have air supremacy. British and U. S. industries have forged the air arm with a precision and flexibility of attack never matched by the *Luftwaffe* even in its palmiest days.

Important blows have been struck at rail communications, dock facilities and industrial installations. The blows are having repercussions in Sicily. At the narrowest point between the toe of Italy and the north-east tip of Sicily, where the Straits of Messina are only two or three miles wide, both ends of the Giovanni-Messina sea train ferry have been pounded so consistently that trains are completely disorganised. The damage and dislocation caused by the attacks of Allied bombers on the marshalling yards of Rome and Naples should mean that henceforth very few supplies for Sicilian forces will get through by that route.

The undoubted superiority of the moment goes back far before the sea and airborne invasion was attempted. From the end of the first week in July, Allied air supremacy over the island has been complete. The Sicilian campaign has already proved a fantastic example of how an inferior air force can be completely nullified by systematic neutralising of its airfields. And now like an incoming tide the Allied air offensive is creeping northwards over the whole of Italy.

GERMANY'S POLITICAL AND MILITARY WORRIES.

SATELLITE STATES MAY DRIFT FROM AXIS.

By W. N. Ewer.

The German High Command is itself more than worried by the "military situation arising from the desperate assaults by Soviet masses and the Sicilian landing."

Nor is the German worry purely military. "German political circles," says the D. N. B. German news agency political correspondent, "talk of Europe's fronts of destiny. This expression shows logical connection between the battles raging and the common destiny of European nations fighting on these fronts."

This desire to stress "common destiny" of Germany, Italy and their satellites reflects growing anxiety in Berlin lest the "satellites", including Italy, should try to separate their "destiny" from that of the Reich.

And it is only natural that Berlin should fear weakening, indeed possible disintegration, of its alliances. Events are beginning to shake their foundation, which was belief in the certainty of German victory.

The strength and swiftness of the Allied thrust into Sicily have impressed Europe more even than the ease and skill of landing.

It is not simply that the success has exceeded all anticipation. It is the evidence that the offensive strength of the Allies is far greater than had been realised.

Equally disturbing to "satellites" is the evidence of increasing Axis weakness. They had been persuaded that Sicily would prove an impregnable fortress. Now they are assured that it was a practically undefended "insular outpost." That is causing

serious reflection on the worrying possibility that the defence of the Balkans, of Western Europe and of the east front may also be far less solid than their repute.

Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria, when they tied themselves to the Axis, had no misgivings about their own security. Now with the double news from Sicily and from Russia, they find suddenly that they have to reckon with two ominous possibilities. They may in no distant future have to face an Anglo-American invasion from the south or a Russian invasion from the east.

It is not surprising in such circumstances that "peace feelers" are multiplying: that more and more hints are being dropped that the satellites, if they could find an opportunity, would gladly make peace.

There are already signs too that the news filtering through censorships of Anglo-American methods in the occupied area of Sicily is already having effect. People who have been taught that an Allied occupation would mean chaos and pillage and terror are hearing about the work of the Allied military Government.

It is a new thing in the war, this specially trained staff of administrators who have been taught the language, laws, customs and administrative methods of the country which the Allied armies are busy occupying.

The result in Sicily is that there has been no chaos and no interregnum, but a swift orderly transition from one administration to another. And the new administrators, though rigorous in all matters affecting military security and conduct of operations, are far less harsh than the old. The new system, though necessarily a despotism, is essentially benevolent despotism. As news of it spreads, others than the Sicilians are beginning to realise that though war makers and war criminals have nothing to hope for but justice, the "common man" has no reason to dread an Anglo-American military invasion.

OVERCOMING TACTICAL PROBLEMS IN BOMBING.

R. A. F.'S REVOLUTIONARY METHODS.

In carrying out its 1939 master plan of attack on enemy arms production, transport facilities and civilian production, the R. A. F. has had to solve three tactical problems—finding the target, overcoming the defences, and destroying the target. The objectives can be divided into two classes according to location: concentrated targets and isolated ones. Examples of the former are the Ruhr cities, where arms production facilities occupy the greater part of the built-up areas; transport objectives like railway lines, stations, depôts and shunting yards woven inseparably into the texture of large cities like Cologne; and civilian production scattered evenly through German cities like the West German textile centres. Examples of isolated targets are the Philips Radio Works in Eindhoven, Holland; the locomotive factory at St. Joseph in Brittany; and power plants like Knapsack and Quadrath near Cologne. Each class of objectives demands a different type of attack. The first category, where the objective is concentrated over a large area and is most heavily defended, clearly demands night attack, where necessary precision is obtainable, with advantages of minimising fighter defence and accurate anti-aircraft concentration against planes. The second category, where the defences are scattered round pinpoint

targets, demands day attack to get the necessary precision. Since the towns contain the main targets of all categories, night operations have been the backbone of the Bomber Command's activies, accounting for 75 per cent of its sorties.

PATHFINDER FORCE.

The R.A.F. has to decide in each case what type of attack is most worth while, and at the same time to ensure that the raiding force can get to the right place to deliver the attack—a navigational problem. The R.A.F. solution to this problem began with the *Luftwaffe's* fire raid on London on December 29, 1940, which proved that a fire visible 100 miles away could guide bombers to industrial objectives by night. In a raid on one of Germany's main supply bases for the North Russian front in Lubeck, the R.A.F tested the new tactics for the first time (March 28, 1942). The first bomber wave allowed 30 minutes to start fires with incendiaries, while the second wave carried 300 tons of high explosive bombs to destroy warehouse stocks, etc. Twelve factories, the central electric station, and gas and railway installations were destroyed. These tactics were repeated with complete success several times later. Thus the R.A.F. solved the problem of locating the target by a formation now known as the pathfinder force.

OVERCOMING DEFENCES.

The second tactical problem was to overcome the defences. The weight of bombs dropped within a given time yields diminishing returns, until a point is reached where the defences are swamped, after which an increase in bomb weight yields rapidly increasing returns. In other words, the strength of the defences is determined by the weight of the attack. A fire in an arms factory is obviously unlikely to destroy the target unless A.R.P. personnel is insufficient to extinguish it; hence enough factories, stations, etc., must be set on fire to overwhelm A. R. P. personnel.

The second point is that in order to bomb accurately, the need for swerving to avoid anti-aircraft fire must be minimised—that is, the anti-aircraft gun defences must also be saturated.

The third point is the need to eliminate searchlights which similarly prevent an unhindered bombing run.

To overcome A. R. P., anti-aircraft gun and searchlight defences, and thus make the destruction of German war industry possible, Britain evolved entirely new tactics of "saturation attack". Given the strength of the defences, and the available number of planes--that is, bomb capacity of attack—all that remained was to calculate the number of tons per minute needed to saturate the defences, and the length of attack needed to overcome the defences was fixed. After that, the only need to wipe out German war industry was the maximum number of additional bombers to exploit the prostration of defences and reap increasing returns.

The third tactical problem facing the R. A. F. was ability permanently to destroy the German factories after defences were overcome. This was mainly a question of sufficient bombers over target factories in a given time, and dropping the necessary incendiaries for the destruction of the buildings, then adding high explosives to destroy machinery furnaces and the like. However, the maximum number of bombers concentrated in a given time was limited by the essential distance between planes to avoid collision. Therefore the problem of increasing the weight of attack at a given time can be solved only by two methods. The first is to increase the size—that is, the carrying capacity of the

plane. Here we see the amazing insight of R. A. F. commanders who planned even pre-war British bombers like the Lancaster and the Halifax with operational bombloads of some 12,000 lbs each and the Stirling with 17,000 lbs (contrast the maximum bombload of a German bomber—6,615 lbs in a Dornier–217). The second method is to increase the size of bombs because, like the attack as a whole, the destructiveness of individual bombs increases to a certain point in geometric proportion to their size—that is, one 4,000–pound bomb is better than two 2,000–pound bombs ; hence the increase in the weight of British bombs from a maximum of 500 lbs in 1940 to 8,000 lbs in 1942.

DAYLIGHT ATTACK.

Although daylight attack is a relatively minor part of the British air offensive on German land targets, the R. A. F. has solved similar tactical problems with the same outstanding success as in night attacks. Since daylight obviates the problem of finding the target, the first problem is to overcome the defences, which is only different from the night problem in so far as fighter defence is probably the main obstacle. This is overcome by the R. A. F. in two ways. The first is surprise. This is attained by a new hedge-hopping technique invented for heavy bombers, with the planes flying so low that they are invisihle at long distances and anti-aircraft gunfire is unable to concentrate. But, after compelling Germany to concentrate over 50 per cent of her fighters in the west, the R. A. F. needed new tactics provided by a light bomber with extreme speed and manoeuvrability to match the fighters, also lightness of construction for maximum bombload and simplicity of design for mass production. The answer to these problems is provided by the Mosquito, the fastest bomber in the world, with a revolutionary wooden construction and an amazing bombload of one ton, half the bombload of the four-engined Fortress. Once arrived at the target, the Mosquito and other light bombers use the same 'saturation' tactics as the heavy night bombers.

THE "GHOST" ARMY.

Lt. Gen. W. G. Holmes, Commander of Britain's Ninth Army which faces South-East Europe, told me that his forces—"very large forces"—are ready and eager to strike, cables the Daily Express correspondent with the Ninth Army.

"I cannot say anything that may tend to suggest when we may start or where we may go", the General said, "because I believe that up to this moment I have kept the enemy pretty well foxed about our plans.

"The Hun is worried and that is how we like to have him. We propose to worry him a lot more when we meet. We have waited a long time for the chance and when it comes we mean to make the very best of it."

I drove along the coastline with its rocky inlets and long sandy bays—which a commando officer assured me were "made for large-scale amphibious exercises—to a great army camp." It was evident that the Ninth Army has enjoyed one of the best training grounds in the world, and General Holmes is satisfied that their time has not been wasted. "The Ninth Army has been quiet during the last 12 months", he said, "but it has not been quiescent. We have been through a big training plan—men are about twice as good as they were a year ago and, I think, you will agree they look it.

"They are cheerful and busy. When they go to bed they are ready for sleep."

But the training is only half the story. The other half is a secret which, owing to security reasons, has made of the Ninth a ghost-army whose units, weapons, methods and dispositions must not be mentioned, whose senior commanders are cloaked in mystery and whose leader, General Holmes, has so long been an elusive shadowy figure nobody really knows.

The Army's Commander approves of this secrecy. He believes it has brought results, and screened our battle order from the enemy, who must be increasingly desperate to discover it.

Names and places are seldom mentioned in the Ninth Army. Curtains are drawn apologetically but firmly over maps when you enter the room. Telephone talk is always ambiguous—"The man you met last night says the new toys should go to the second point I mentioned, so that Army so and so can see them right side up." Notices everywhere in this area warn you bluntly: "Discussion of military. naval or air force affairs is a court-martial offence." Soldiers' letters are censored with ferocity. "It is in their own interest", says General Holmes.

The security, set up on the frontier to stop news filtering to Germany through Turkey, would make a wonderful story if it could be told. But until this new army is unleashed to give battle, its most fitting emblem is oyster.

Holmes of the Ninth was described to me in advance as a "hulking great fellow with a head on him".

He is six feet tall, built as a gladiator.

From a face as bronzed and placid as the head on a coin, shine eyes of tender blue—eyes, however, that no erring subordinate would care to meet. One feels that anyone who gets in his way is likely to be hurt, and that here is a man for whom the joy of battle could take the place of food.

For all this latent sense of challenge, Holmes is modest, naturally good humoured, with an air of unhurried reflection when you put a question to him, and an air of poorly concealed amusement when he says that the answer cannot "of course" be published. It is not easy to find this army commander in. He prefers the camp to swollen base Headquarters, and likes to travel around, stirring his troops by appearing over them from his caravan in a dusty battle dress.

GUARDING THE SEA LINES.

---

by Admiral Sir William James, M. P., Chief of Naval Information.

I am often asked why I have been appointed as Chief of Naval Information, which is a new post. Well, my job is to bring before our people and our allies, to a greater extent than hitherto, the work and achievement of the Royal Navy. It may seem strange that there should be any necessity for this, in view of the fact that we are an island people, and for centuries have depended for our existence on holding command of the sea-lines of communication, but so much of the work of the Royal Navy takes place in comparative obscurity that it becomes overshadowed by the more dramatic incidents in war.

This is nothing new. Though, thanks to the visits paid by our Fleet in pre-war years to seaport towns, more is known about its life and purpose than in the "strong, silent" Navy days, I am sure I am right in saying that its work is to a great extent taken for granted. The British Navy has always won through in the end, and it is unimaginable that it would let us down. That is a very natural and very widespread thought. The more dramatic events in the sea war have taken place in waters where the Navy fights in close companionship with the Royal Air Force, and it is sometimes forgotten that our vital sea lines of communication for the greater part of their immense length are outside the range of shore-based operational aircraft.

In talking to my friends, I often find that they do not realise that the keystones of our whole war structure are our main fleets. This does not surprise me, as I know that the part played by the main fleets has often not been fully understood by our people. It is under the guardianship of the main or covering fleets that the whole of the work of the vast armada of small vessels takes place. The strategic set-up in a maritime war has never changed since guns were mounted in ships and squadrons of fighting ships were formed.

If Lord Hawke, who was our great Admiral in the middle of the eighteenth century, were looking down to-day on the oceans and seas, he would see a very familiar sight—merchant ships in convoy, protected by men-of-war, crossing the Atlantic backwards and forwards; other convoys going round the Cape; flotillas busy in the narrows and the main fleets at their strategic bases. In his day, the Atlantic convoys would have been carrying Wolfe and his men to Canada, and the round-the-Cape convoys carrying Clive and his men to India. The amphibious operations against the French coast and the great landing in Africa would seem quite familiar to him, because it was in his day that this form of operation was used to such good effect. Hawke kept his fleet at sea for three years in all weather conditions, then at last caught the French Fleet at sea and defeated them at Quiberon Bay; but so little did the people understand all that this magnificent leader and his splendid sailors had done, that they were burning his effigy in London as the first broadsides were fired.

So, too, in the last war, when the submarine menace was at its height, men in the highest authority in this country were demanding that Beatty's Grand Fleet should be weakened, so as to strengthen the anti-submarine forces. That would have been courting disaster. One thing that must never be done is to chip bits off the keystones of the naval structure.

An Admiral, who had been recently in one of the covering fleets, told me the other day that many of the younger ratings in his ships did not realise the profound influence they were having on the desert war several thousand miles away. They did not realise that but for their presence and battleworthiness the sea lines of communication to our armies might be broken. The spectacular events at sea, such as the epic chase of the *Bismarck*, and the tremendous battles that have been fought by our sailors taking munitions and supplies to Russia and Malta, naturally fire the imagination, but little is heard of the officers and men of the covering fleets who work unremittingly to keep their ships ready for the battle for which they all yearn. If one day they do bring the enemy to battle, I hope everyone will remember how they endured what Kipling so aptly called "the sodden years of heaped-up weariness" and never relaxed for a moment.

Then there is a great story about the cruisers, whose task is to free oceans from raiders. I met a captain of one of these ships the other day, who had, in mileage, been five times round the world and been in every ocean during the last two years. In that time he had seen his decks and guns thickly overlaid with ice, as you saw in some recent photographs, and also his engine-room staff working in two-hour watches for days on end in a temperature of 140 degrees when chasing a raider. All day and every day the crews of these ships must be ready on their toes for the bugle call to action.

The Captain of one of these cruisers told me a good story. His men had gone to action stations every morning for over a year—over 400 times—and on Christmas Eve the Commander heard some officers in the wardroom discussing whether an exception would be made on Christmas morning. There was no information of any enemy in the vicinity, and the Commander himself had been turning over in his mind whether he would let them off for once. But when he heard the officers discussing the possibility, some good fairy whispered "No." So on Christmas morning they were all at their stations as usual, and whilst actually at their stations an enemy ship was sighted.

When one thinks of the enormous damage done by enemy ocean raiders in the last war, one realises the immense importance of the work of these cruisers, who so seldom come into the limelight. The convoy escort vessels probably have the hardest task of all. They plug away day in and day out in the wide oceans, often in the most terrible weather, to safeguard their gallant companions of the Merchant Navy. This never-ending grim battle of the Atlantic will be fought remorselessly till the enemy is finally defeated.

Then there are the mine-sweepers. Theirs is a great story. I took a friend one day out to Spithead and far away on the horizon we could see the minesweepers working in the fairways. I said to him: "If they stopped work, the war would stop." He was surprised. And I told him how they left the jetties every day at first dawn, whatever the weather, storm or biting cold, and carried out their hazardous task till dark. If they stopped work, no petrol for our bombers and fighters, no food, no raw materials could come into our ports. I told him that they constantly face two foes, the mine under water and enemy planes.

In the early days of the Channel war a heavy bomb hit one of these trawlers and did not explode, and was stopped on the engine-room plates. The report from the Captain read: "With the assistance of the Chief Engineer I carried bomb on deck and threw it overboard." On making enquiries, I found that the engine-man on duty had never thought of leaving his post; the skipper had ordered his crew into the dinghy whilst he and the Chief Engineer somehow managed to hoist the bomb out of the engine-room and throw it overboard. They knew that some of the enemy bombs had delayed-action fuses and that shaking the bomb might send it off. But all that mattered to them was to get rid of the bomb, save their ship and get on with their sweeping. That was typical of these sturdy mariners.

Then there is the Fleet Air Arm. They have struck the headlines once or twice, with the brilliant attack at Taranto, the "strikes" on the Italian Battle Fleet that led to the decisive night action at Matapan, and the attacks on the *Bismarck*. But little is known of their day-to-day work. Some of our naval airmen who attacked the *Bismarck* returned to their carrier during a heavy storm. The flight deck was at the time rising and falling

through 50 feet. Taking off and landing on the decks of carriers in all weathers is a routine job for these sailor airmen.

It is not generally known that in Bader's famous squadron, which fought so brilliantly in the Battle of Britain, three of his planes were flown by naval pilots. Nor have you heard much of the part played by this gallant company in the desert war. I am sure that few of you have heard the story of the naval plane that gave the first news to Admiral Sir Jack Tovey that the *Bismarck* had sailed. The weather was not fit for flying and all planes were grounded. But Captain Fancourt, in command of a naval air station, called for volunteers, a call which met with immediate response from Commander Rotherham, Lieutenant Goddard and two naval ratings, Milne and Armstrong They flew over to Norway and obtained the vital information that the *Bismarck* had sailed. Shortly after they had taken off they received reports that the weather was impossible for flying, but they went on. Within a few minuts of Rotherham's report reaching Admiral Tovey, the Fleet was at sea in chase. I am hoping that you will hear more of these naval airmen; no force in this war can look back to a prouder record of achievements.

Of course, I have not forgotten the brilliant exploits of our submarines and the dashing and skilful attacks of our coastal forces. But their achievements are more spectacular, and therefore more familiar to you, than the achievements of other forces I have mentioned.

So there is a great story to be told of the work of the Fleet, a story of thousands of officers and men who seldom come into the limelight, but are always in great heart and keep their ships at the highest pitch of efficiency; a story of officers and men who never relax from their hazardous work of clearing the fairways; a story of officers and men who will spend the war years battling against fierce Atlantic storms to bring their gallant comrades of the Merchant Navy safe to port; a story of a small but brilliant company of naval officers and men who daily face the hazards of flying on and off ships in all weathers.

My job, as Chief of Naval Information, is to see that this story is told, not only so that the officers and men of the Royal Navy should occupy their rightful place in your thoughts, but that you should realise that our whole war effort depends on the men who are striving, often against heavy odds, to keep the sea lines of communication open for our armies, our food and our war materials.

SOME ISLANDS IN THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC.

(The following topographical notes are provided in the hope that they will be useful as a background to the present Allied offensive in S. W. Pacific).

New Georgia and neighbouring islands form a compact group in the middle of the Solomons chain. This group, includes the islands of Rendova, Vangunu, New Georgia, Kolombangara, Wanawana, Arundel, Gizo, Tetipari, Ganongga, Vella Lavella and Gatukai, and covers an area measuring 130 miles (from south-east to north-west) by 40 miles.

Apart from coconut plantations, all the islands are covered with ever green forest, the undergrowth being most dense near the coast. Rainfall is heavy. No island has less than 100 inches of rain per annum and some have as much as 200 inches. Even in the "dry" season (from September to December) the monthly rainfall is never less than seven inches. The wettest month of the year is January.

NEW GEORGIA AND RENDOVA.

New Georgia, the largest island of this group, measures roughly 40 miles by 20 miles. It is mountainous, with hills rising to as much as 2,500 feet. On the western tip of the island there is a flat stretch behind the beach which the Japanese have been using as a base for air attack on Guadalcanar. Munda airfield, as it has come to be known, is about eight miles due north of Rendova Island, which was seized by General MacArthur's forces on June 30. Viru Harbour (also seized on June 30) is on the south coast of New Georgia, about 30 miles south-east of Munda. It is narrow and landlocked, with an entrance only 300 yards wide between vertical cliffs.

Rendova Island is about 20 miles long and eight miles wide. Rendova Harbour, on the northern tip, facing Munda, can accommodate vessels of up to 10,000 tons displacement (i. e. including destroyers and cruisers), though it cannot be a very safe anchorage, as long as the Japanese hold on to Munda airfield, which is less than three minutes' flying time distant. The nature of the terrain, most of which is steep and densely wooded, suggests that it is unlikely the Allies will attempt to construct an airfield here.

KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

Kolombangara Island, which is believed to have served as a supply base for the Japanese airfield at Munda and for the Japanese forces in the neighbourhood, is almost circular, with a diameter of 18 miles. The cone of an extinct volcano, it rises steeply on all sides. At the south-east corner, however, the Japanese have cleared a coconut plantation and constructed an airfield which is referred to in communiqués as Vila. This airfield is about 15 miles north-west of Munda. The island has three comparatively good anchorages—at Vila, Webster Cove and Bambari Harbour.

The most important islands in the New Guinea area (between the Solomons and the Netherlands East Indies) are New Guinea itself, New Britain, New Ireland, Aru and Timor. Tropical climate of the worst type is found in these islands, which lie just south of the Equator. The jungle, which abounds, is dark and dank. Even the strong rays of the equatorial sun rarely penetrate to the ground, so thick is the foliage of trees and the undergrowth.

NEW GUINEA.

By far the largest island is New Guinea. With an area of 311,750 square miles, it is as large as the whole of Burma and Bengal Provinces together. Roads are almost non-existent and the contending armies, both enemy and allied, have to build their own. Spine-like mountain ranges (chief among them being the Owen Stanley, Muller, Oranje and Nassau ranges) run the length of the island from west to east.

The greater part of the island remains unaffected by the present operations. The north coast, which has been occupied by the Japanese, is of main interest. The most important places here are the ports of Wewak, Madang, Lae and Salamaua. Both Lae and Salamaua are on the Huon Gulf (where a great enemy convoy was wiped out some weeks ago) and are important Japanese supply bases.

NEW BRITAIN AND NEW IRELAND.

To the north-east of Lae and Salamaua lies the island of New Britain It has an area of 14,600 miles—roughly that of the North-West Frontier Province of India. It is in this island that Rabaul—the enemy's chief naval and air base in the S. W. Pacific—is situated. Rabaul occupies a central position in relation to both the Solomons in the

south-east and New Guinea in the south-west. Gasmata, closer to New Guinea than Rabaul, is an important Japanese base on the southern shore of the island.

New Ireland lies to the north of New Britain, from which it is separated by only 50 miles of sea. Kavieng, at the northern tip of the island, is its most important town. The southern tip of New Ireland is about 200 miles from Bougainville (at the north-western end of the Solomons chain).

TROBRIAND AND WOODLARK ISLANDS.

These two island groups, situated north-east of the eastern extremity of New Guinea, though small, are of considerable strategic value. Their occupation brings the Allied forces to within 150 miles of Gasmata, 300 miles of Rabaul and 330 miles of Faisi, a Japanese base on Bougainville. The terrain of these islands is suitable for airfield construction—a fact of the utmost importance.

The Trobriands group comprises eight islands (four large and four smaller ones), chief among them being Kiriwina, which is 28 miles long and 13 miles wide. The Woodlark group comprises seven islands, the only large one (Murua) being 40 miles long and 15 miles wide.

JAPANESE SOP TO SIAM.

SUZERAINTY OVER MALAY STATES.

(*The Economist*).

"Co-prosperity" and the "New Order" follow a very similar pattern.

There are few political and economic expedients adopted by Japan that were not first perfected by Germany in occupied Europe. Siam is learning, as Rumania and Hungary and Bulgaria have learnt, that to be a satellite Power is not the easy sailing it seemed when first the ship of State set off in the wake of the totalitarian armada. There were a few halcyon days at first, while the Japanese were overrunning the Malay peninsula, and co-prosperity seemed to be dawning with unlimited power and plunder. But as usual the "New Order's" economics of conquest quickly dispelled the first illusions.

Cut off from its old markets, Siam found itself compelled to sell only to Japan. Its rice crop was shipped there. No processed goods and no industrial supplies were shipped back. The Siamese army—which meant in fact the Japanese—took over control of all Siam's industrial undertakings. Rationing and food control were introduced, and by the middle of 1942, offence against food-laws had been transferred from civil to military courts. About the same time, the Siamese Government began to consider introducing forced labour.

SIAM'S REWARD.

In return for all these benefits, the Siamese were given the honour of fighting the Chinese and in December, after the battles in the Shan States, were rewarded by their Japanese overlords with some territory which incidentally they had won themselves. The privilege of fighting does not seem, however, to have satisfied the Siamese, whose standards of gratitude are somewhat Hungarian.

The Cabinet crisis early this year saw the withdrawal of two Cabinet Ministers, and the Japanese have found it necessary to tighten their hold on the Siamese Government. In return for the growing loss of any sort of political freedom, the Siamese have now received another sop in the shape of two more Shan States and the Malay States of Perlis, Kedah Kelantan and Trengannu.

For a century between the establishment of Singapore and the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of 1909, these States together with the Federated Malay States fell between the British and Siamese sphere of influence, if that is not too grandiose a name for the very nominal suzerainty exercised by Siam—her overlordship was limited to receiving a gold flower every three years from the local rulers. As British trade developed and prosperity in the peninsula rose after 1867 (when Malaya was separated from India), the border States looked more and more to Britain for protection.

1909 TREATY.

At first, the policy urged was one of abstaining from all political guarantees to the local princes. Finally, in the interests of economic development and internal peace, a settlement was reached which placed the local rulers under the protection of the British Government, and established British residents as their local advisers. The Siamese accepted this arrangement under the Anglo-Siamese Treaty signed in 1909. Now they have re-established their suzerainty—or rather the Japanese have inserted them in the chain of indirect rule.

The unfortunate Malays will be lucky if they get away with the gold flower every three years.

PUDUKKOTTAI STATE NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU.

PROGRAMME.

LECTURE CLVIII (*Batch 3*).

7- 8-43	Municipal Office ...	6.00 p.m.
8- 8-43	Alangudi ...	7.00 ,,
,,	Rasiamangalam.	7.30 ,,
9- 8-43	Tirumayyam ...	7.00 ,,
,,	Melur ...	7.30 ,,
10- 8-43	Pallivasal ...	7.00 ,,
,,	Pillamangalam. ...	7.30 ,,
11- 8-43	C. S. M. High School...	10.00 a.m.
,,	Rani's High School ...	10.45 ,,
11- 8-43	College A English ...	10.45 a.m.
,,	College B Tamil ...	10.45 ,,
,,	P. Puduppatti ...	7.00 p.m.
,,	Vendampatti ...	7.30 ,,
12- 8-43	Vellanur ...	7.00 ,,
,,	Sembattur ...	7.30 ,,
13- 8-43	Puliyur ...	7.00 ,,
,,	Kannangudi ..	7.30 ,,

LECTURE CLIX. (*Batch 4*).

14- 8-43	Municipal Office ...	6.00 p.m.
15- 8-43	Kilanilai ...	7.00 ,,
,,	Kilanilai-Puduppatti..	7.30 ,,
16- 8-43	Perumanadu ...	7.00 ,,
,,	Pulvayal ...	7.30 ,,
17- 8-43	Sadayampatti ...	7.00 ,,
,,	Oliyamangalam ...	7.30 ,,
18- 8-43	C. S. M. High School...	10.00 a.m.
,,	Rani's High School ...	10.45 ,,
18- 8-43	College A English ...	10.45 a.m.
,,	College B Tamil ...	10.45 ,,
,,	Annavasal ...	7.00 p.m.
,,	Kilakkurichchi ...	7.30 ,,
19- 8-43	Malampatti ...	7.00 ,,
,,	Perambur ...	7.30 ,,
20- 8-43	Alavayal ...	7.00 ,,
,,	Ammankurichchi ...	7.30 ,,

RECRUITING—ADVERTISEMENT—4 p. m.

7— 8—43	Tirumayyam.
8— 8—43	Kodumbalur.
9— 8—43	Viralimalai.
10— 8—43	Ramachandrapuram.
11— 8—43	Kilanilai-Puduppatti.
12— 8—43	Kulipirai.
13— 8—43	Pudukkottai.
14— 8—43	Vettamviduthi.
15— 8—43	Virachchilai.
16— 8—43	Arimalam.
17— 8—43	Kudumiyamalai.
18— 8—43	Karambakkudi.
19— 8—43	Kilanilai.
20— 8—43	Pudukkottai.

Sri Brihadamba State Press, Pudukkottai. 750—8-8-43.